THOMAS COUNTY CAT.

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COLBY, - - - - - - KANSAS.

WAIT!

When a thought comes to your brain
That would place on life a stain,
Crush it out from heart and mind;
For a purer thought to find,
Wait!

When your lips in haste would speak
Words that show a judgment weak,
Through a passion that would blind,
Or an impulse yet unkind,
Wait!

When a deed you fain would do,
That you might have cause to rue,
Till the shadows flee your mind,
Hands withhold to calm your mind,
Wait!

Wait to passion all subdue;
Wait for loving thought and true;
Wait till lips breathe tender word,
For deeds by gentle impulse stirred.
Wait!
—*The Pansy.*

RAG-PICKING.

How and By Whom This Industry is Carried On in Cities.

In no class or place of human existence does the maxim that "necessity is the mother of invention" appear as a more striking truth than among the poor of great cities. To them intellectual, or social or political problems are as nothing; there is an intenser problem always confronting them—"How to get bread." Their problem is a much harder one, being practical, and to be worked over and over again, and solved anew, every weary day of their lives. The motley professions of the poor are an interesting object of study, and if the poor are not themselves philosophers, they are excellent subjects for philosophical dissection. How characteristic of each city, too, are the little trades peculiar to each! There are many trades common to all, and many only to be found in one. In Paris, to supply the gourmands with bread crumbs for their hams and cutlets, the bread-pickers lie in wait near the schools, and wheedle the bread out of the boys which they have brought for their noon lunch. Carts go round to the back doors every morning and gather the debris of the Parisian feasts, carry it home, separate the conglomerated mixtures, pick out the bread, roast and grind it up and the diners at the fashionable restaurants have it nice and brown, upon the meats so daintily set before them.

New York has its share of the destitute and the desperate. The metropolis inherits the scourge of the older capitals; and though there are many marked differences to be found between the lowest classes in the American and in the European cities, the same broad fact of extremes and too often criminal poverty displays itself in both. The most noticeable and instructive difference between the New York poor and the Parisian poor is the peculiar variegated form of it. Another difference is that the poor of New York are not spread over so large a surface, but are more concentrated in particular quarters. The dangerous classes do not tend to become fixed as in many European cities. The constant bustle and change of American life, the metamorphoses in individual as in the aggregate life, the rapidity and ease with which one passes from one phase to another of existence, the coming on top of poor people and the descending netherward of the rich, have a tendency to disturb the status and to alter the conditions of all classes continually; reaching down in their effects to the lowest, and not leaving the highest exempt from the vicissitudes of which this bubbling and whirlpool are the cause. The poor are thus not eternally poor; one generation grovels in the dust, the next mounts to fortune and enlightenment; the father is sot, beggar, rag-picker—maybe thief and burglar—the son is book-keeper, merchant, lawyer, perhaps clergyman. The same family do not remain long in the same houses or the same quarters. The husband leaves the wife, the wife the husband; the children abandon the disagreeable home, or are caught up and trained by the various charitable and educational associations; some member of the family is continually rising to opulence and respectability. The families of the paupers and beggars and criminals are constantly being broken up.

The rag-picker requires little capital, so his name is legion. A basket and stick with a thin end are his implements, the whole vast city his field of operations; liberty to work his license; the wastefulness of humanity his opportunity; the ingenuity of man (converting almost all things seemingly useless and so rejected, into fair articles of certain and valued use) his market; bread and independence his reward. Humble and groveling as it is, it is by no means the worst of trades.

The rag-pickers are divisible, as is the case with almost every trade, great and small, into groups. Many confine themselves to the mere gathering of refuse, selling it to some one else in its conglomerated state. Others prefer to go through the whole operation, from gathering the rubbish to selling it in separate parcels of each kind to the manufacturers who need it in this particular business. To the latter, the mere collection and selling of rags is but a part of his avocation. Rags, indeed, are but incidental, but one of many branches. Beside them the rag-picker keeps a sharp lookout for all kinds and bits of bone, every piece of broken glass or old iron, every old boot or shoe or strip of leather, and every atom of coal, coaldust, charcoal, or wood which may serve to burn as fuel. The rag-picker begins his work in winter, as well as summer, very early in the morning; some even begin in the middle of the night. The sooner the better, for the poor are a multitude, and the rivalry for dear life is bitter sharp, indeed. The fashionables going to the parties or balls at ten o'clock may, if they will, see the rag-pickers already at a work which is to last all night, and returning homeward at three or four in the morning may, if the eyes be not too heavy, observe new battalions of the drudging army coming upon the even yet but half-gleaned field. Many of the rag-pickers have their regular accustomed round; there are certain neighborhoods where they are known and favored—some others highly favorable to their vocation. The vicinity of the restaurant at certain hours is harvest ground for bones and remnants; rags are most plentiful in the narrower and poorer quarters, but the servants of the private houses are the peculiar patrons of the rag-pickers. Nearly every house has its barrel for refuse, which is emptied late at night or early in the morning in piles in the alleys. Here one may often see as he passes the corner of an alleyway in the night time, dim lanterns moving fitfully here and there; the rag-pickers have reached the scene of operations and are ferreting among the piles with their sticks and jamming all sorts of odds and ends in their baskets, three or four at the same pile, seldom speaking to each other and rarely quarreling. By one or two in the afternoon the rag-picker has filled not only his bag or basket brimming full, but likewise his pockets, the tops of his boots—if boots the poor fellow has—the crown of his hat, the old suspender which passes around his body in place of a belt, the space between waistcoat and body—every available nook, in short, about him; and thus crammed, he returns home for the next part of his work.

At home he has, if a passably well to do and orderly rag-picker, an arrangement by which he may keep his goods in separate receptacles. Often at one side of this modest apartment there is a row of wooden boxes fastened together—one for cloth rags, one for paper, one for scraps of iron, one for bones, and so on. The boxes are large and hold, perhaps, the results of a week's picking. Arrived at home with his gains, he empties the mess upon the floor, and, sitting down beside it, assorts it and deposits each portion into the proper box. It is customary when the rag-pickers carry on the business as I have described, for the manufacturers to send men about to their homes once or twice a week to purchase what they have gathered, paying them on the spot, and themselves conveying the material away. The prices which the ragman receives are slight enough: but at least there is a steady demand for that which he has to sell, and his luck, if varying, seldom altogether fails him. For paper and rags he gets three cents a pound; for bones, scraps of meat, vegetables or bread, fifty cents a bushel; old boots and shoes and scraps of leather have no set price, but are bought usually for fuel, and bring from two to four cents a pound; iron is subjected to the same variableness, as iron is dearer or cheaper in the general market. The active and skilled rag-picker often makes ten or twelve dollars a week. Such cases are, however, exceptional, the great majority of rag-pickers receiving no more than four or five dollars a week. As in all trades or occupations, there are many grades among the rag-pickers; there is a chance here as well as in other walks of life for energy, capacity and industry to command the highest price. The incomes I have stated illustrate the extremes, the best class of workmen in rag-picking deriving from it as good a living as others do in different branches of manual labor; while the lowest rag-picking stratum, the lazy, the stupid, just make enough to drag along a precarious existence from day to day, living almost literally from hand to mouth. Too many of them only earn their paltry pittance to hasten to the low bar-rooms in the Bowery or down by the river, where they soon make an end of it by spending their last penny in drink. But those who look upon rag pickers as a class as degraded, dissipated, motiveless people utterly mistake them. Humble as their avocation is they are often found not humbled by it.

The total number of people pursuing this vocation in New York city is estimated at about fourteen hundred, of which a considerable majority are women; and it is observed that the women do quite as well as the men, and not seldom are the more skillful and successful of the two. There are also some children who have early been forced by their parents into rag-picking. It is interesting to take note of what becomes of the miscellaneous materials which the rag-pickers manage to gather in the various districts, odd holes and corners of the great city. Here are a few of their destinations: The old rags and paper, after being sorted and resorted until the different qualities are divided into separate bundles, finally reach, through the great dealers, the paper manufacturer; and in no long time thereafter emerge into the printing offices, long fair sheets pass through the great creaking presses and appear at the breakfast table as the morning papers. Of the bones which are picked up in the streets and picked up out of the refuse barrels, the best become, after various processes, umbrella and parasol handles, snuff boxes and cigar cases; these, too, are often turned into tooth brushes, buttons and similar articles of toilet or dress. The history of the broken glass which is picked up in every imaginable shape and form, in every imaginable nook and corner, ever repeats itself, and it is Phœnix like, for it gets in the end to the glass manufacturer again, who solders it altogether, then twists and turns it into old familiar shapes; the glass blowers blow it in the dime museums, and it once more reaches, under skillful manipulation, the glories of ornamental goblets and mirrors, cruet bottles and decanters. What the old iron becomes in its widely divergent peregrinations, after leaving the rag-picker's hands, may be imagined; it returns, of course, to its manifold original uses; and this being beyond all others the age of iron, when iron ministers to a thousand needs of man, and is indispensable alike in palace and in hovel, it is the most valuable as well as the most frequent of the rag-picker's gleanings. One use of it, however, is curious. The "Grecian bend" being in fashion, iron was used in making the ladies' panniers; so that the bits of old iron gathered by the rag-picker in the alleys have doubtless in many cases found their way from the gutter to the boudoir. The rag-picker in the pursuit of his trade is mindful of the minutest details. There is no solitary atom of which human use can be made that he will not take. He refuses nothing, and is emphatically a gleaner of unconsidered trifles. He has his hopes and aspirations and encouragements. In the heap of rags and refuse he espies possible, often probable, competence. Swear at him as we may, he dignifies labor by his industry, his economy and his independence, and is a living peripatetic sermon from the text which teaches us to despise not the day of small things.—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

PUG JEWELRY.

One of the Latest Wrinkles of Fashionable Female Cranks.

"What was the trouble with your customer?" the manager was asked as he walked into the store. "Was she one of the crank species?" "Well," said the manager, "if you can call a person a crank who thinks more of a dog than a child, then she is one, and the class of which she is a fair specimen is by no means small. The whole trouble arose from a mistake made in measuring her dog's foreleg for a bracelet. After the animal had worn it a few times it became tight, and in removing it the skin was slightly abraded. Why do I say that she thought more of her dog than her child? Well, my judgment is based upon a commercial transaction. She came in here about two weeks ago with one of the prettiest children I ever saw and bought a ring for the little one. It cost $2.75, while she paid $28 for a bracelet for the yelping cur."

"Is there much of a trade in animal ornaments?"

"Well, yes, though at present there is not much doing, because the people who buy these things are out of the city. Just before the opening of the summer-resorts our trade had a wonderful boom, and it would have surprised one who had not been initiated to see the valuable ornaments that were ordered for pets. The trade, however, has not been as good this year as it was last, probably because the line of jewelry worn by each animal was full. This business began six or seven years ago, and jumped into full swing when at one of the animal dog shows, a pug was exhibited with a beautiful pair of bracelets upon its forelegs. The ladies were overcome by the gnawings of envy and hastened to adorn their pugs in the same way. Some even went so far as to have the ears of their dogs pierced and dainty little ear-drops suspended therefrom. A philanthropic spirit started the story that this practice interfered with the dog's hearing and was a mild method of torture, and it has now fallen into disuse. However much the owners may admire the appearance of their bespangled pets, I have yet to find the dog that feels elated when jewelry is put on him. Dogs usually try to tear these things off with their paws or gnaw them off. These ornaments are not confined to bracelets, but include collars—plain, jeweled, or with artistically engraved monograms—expensive blankets and embroidered wraps. They are ordered for dogs of every size and species, but more frequently for dogs that might be termed pets. The prices paid are various, but are always high, because nearly every order provides for a special design, and the patterns and settings, if jewels are used, have to be specially prepared. I know of one lady who owned a fine pug and terrier. She had a fancy that they would look well in double harness, and ordered a set to be made after a pattern that she had drawn on paper. It was an elaborate affair studded with gems, and a model of beauty when completed. She counted out $250 for it without a murmur.—*Chicago Tribune.*

SEEN IN GLASS TANKS.

Microscopic Researches at a Little Massachusetts Town.

A ride of three miles from Gloucester on the stage coach, through one of the most rocky regions of Massachusetts, brings the visitor to the little village of Annisquam, which is picturesquely nestled at the base of some granite hills looking down upon an arm of water extending in from Ipswich Bay. As one approaches the village across a wooden bridge one sees in a prominent position a very tall windmill. This is the means by which water is kept constantly flowing through the aquaria, and the animals kept alive for the students to study. Just beside this windmill is the old, yellow-painted, weather-beaten, barn-like building, which looks more like a fish house than anything else. It is in here that wise students and still wiser teachers and professors come to study into the habits and structure of marine life. Here vast numbers of crabs, shrimp, sea anemones, starfishes and fish in general are annually consigned to alcohol and carried far away into the country to create wonder in the minds of the country students who have never seen the sea shore.

Entering the building, we find ourselves in a dreary-looking room, with tables of unpainted pine placed before each window, and with shelves filled with bottles of alcohol e specimens of our most common animals. The chief interest to the visitor is centered in the aquaria which are filled with life. A beautiful flower garden of sea-anemones lines the bottom of the tank, each individual differing from its neighbor in shape and color. Hermit crabs frisk about with their clumsy shells dragging along behind them, reminding one of a pair of horses and a stage-coach. They are playful little creatures, and enjoy nothing better than a good, square fight with each other. They are animals which one can watch with unflagging interest for hours and all the time discover new traits. The sportive squid darts about, forward and backward, with equal facility, ejecting its inky fluid whenever surprised, and the starfish crawls slowly up the sides of the aquarium toward an unsuspecting shell, bent upon destruction in its mysterious way. A visitor can find interest for hours in these glass tanks.—*Boston Traveller.*

—What makes you think him a genius? Does it not take a genius to live without work, when he has no property, or visible means of support?

FARM BUILDINGS.

Suggestions Looking to Their Proper Protection.

The destiny of every farm-house or isolated country dwelling in this country appears to be destruction by fire. The older houses burn as regularly from "defective chimneys" as accidental deaths follow the use of the gun that "he didn't know was loaded."

The new houses are comparatively exempt from fires of this class, and the conclusion might be reached that the old builders did not know how to construct a perfectly safe flue; this, however, would be an error. Many of the defective flues require time for their production. When new they were probably as perfect as any that are built now. Where wood is used as a fuel a large amount of "creosote," or pyroligneous acid, as it is termed by the chemist, is formed. It passes from the fire in the form of steam, but as it reaches the higher parts of the chimney is condensed upon the walls and is absorbed by the sooty lining. The liquid is very corrosive and readily attacks the mortar, in time completely destroying it. The destruction is aided by the rains, which wash down the soot and mortar which has been dissolved. This process usually continues until the whole upper portion of the chimney for fifteen or eighteen feet, and in some cases even a greater distance, is little better than a pile of bricks with wide and open joints. Under ordinary conditions there is an in-draught into the chimney at all points, and the only effect which these cracks have is to lessen the power of the "draught" to some extent. In stormy weather, however, the gusts of wind which cause a puff of smoke to be thrown from the fire-place or the stove force the smoke out of these openings, and the fatal spark is blown out against some old and tinder-dry beam to smolder and break into flame hours after the mischief has been done. Fires of this class almost always start in places where the fire itself can not be reached, and even with an efficient fire department a house thus endangered could hardly be saved.

Another source of danger is to be found in the beams and woodwork resting against the hot brickwork or against hot flues from furnaces. As these chimneys and flues never become hot enough to light a match, no alarm is felt in regard to them, and, usually, no effort is made to secure protection. There is danger, but it is of a kind not usually suspected. Wood when kept for a long time at a temperature considerably below that of boiling water undergoes a very peculiar change, and is finally converted into a brown or black charcoal. During this conversion it gradually acquires one of the characteristic properties of fresh charcoal, that of absorbing oxygen from the air so rapidly as to become heated and at last to burst into flame by a sort of spontaneous combustion. Beams, partitions and other woodwork undergoing the charring process may, after some years, begin to smolder, and burn for hours, or even a whole day, before finally bursting into flame. The fire has, in the meantime, been spreading along out of sight and reach, and when discovered is usually quite beyond control. The ash-barrel, when wood has been used for fuel, has caused an immense number of fires. These, and the eating of matches by mice and rats, may be classed as disgraceful causes of fires, because perfectly preventable. Spontaneous combustion from oily rags and papers causes a few fires. Faulty lightning-rod connections form another class of some importance.

The question now arises: What remedies are to be applied, and how may country houses be rendered more secure against fire, without entirely reconstructing them? The simplicity of the directions are very likely to lead to their neglect. Old chimneys should be "pointed up" from top to bottom; that is, the joints in the bricks should be filled with fresh mortar. When the flues are large they should be plastered inside as well as out. Sometimes round tiles can be put in so as to make continuous flues. These are safe and give an excellent draught. The essential point is to make the chimney tight and keep it so; this is imperative, if safety is to be secured. Woodwork must not be allowed to come against flues and chimneys in such a way as to cause it to feel hot or warm to the touch. Six inches clear space between a stove-pipe and a beam or partition is none too great. A sheet of zinc is not a protection unless it has an air space in addition. Dig into beams, etc., that have been long exposed to heat and see what condition the timber is in. If charring has begun it is high time to reform the construction.

Take up a hen's only in metal vessels, and if a metal barrel or its equivalent can not be had carry the ashes at once to a store-house, which should be of brick or stone, or made fireproof by some method of construction. A barrel plastered inside is better than one with no protection. In these days when spices and many other things of the kind are put up in tin boxes or cans, no excuse exists for keeping matches in wood or paper packages. When in tin boxes they are out of the way of mice. To leave them scattered upon mantels or tables is a criminal act, which too frequently brings its own punishment. Spontaneous combustion does not often occur in country houses, but barns are frequently destroyed by heating of wet hay, or are struck by lightning on account of the column of steam and vapor which rises from their damp and heating contents. When hay goes into the barn in a damp condition the farmer runs many risks which he can not well afford to take.

The lightning-rod should have a large and heavy metallic connection with damp earth, and this should be inspected frequently to make sure that rust has not destroyed the rod and converted it into a source of danger. Every house should be provided with some kind of a portable force-pump, capable of throwing a stream of water twenty-five or thirty feet. The pumps which can be attached to a pail and used for watering gardens answer the purpose perfectly, except that a hose eighteen or twenty feet in length should be provided. With such a cheap and simple apparatus water can be thrown in between beams, behind chimneys, and into all the nooks and crannies that can not be reached with a pail or dipper. In such places fires start, and though their position is often seen, the householder stands helpless for want of some means of throwing a few cupfuls of water upon the smoldering places. It too frequently happens in winter that a single pail of water in the kitchen sink is the only supply at hand if a fire should be discovered. In mills, pails are seen in stated places and kept always filled. The suggestion is a good one for farmers. A few extra pails of water at night or in the daytime form a very good and cheap insurance. In conclusion, it is safe to say that carelessness is the great incendiary, and that watchfulness is as good as an insurance policy.—*Forest, Forge and Farm.*

ABOUT BROOCHES.

Parisian Information Regarding Their Styles and Manufacture.

It is of smaller trinkets—more especially brooches—that I shall treat now. To begin with, there are those stock forms, which, in spite of the great influx of novelties, hold their own in a most pertinacious fashion. Foremost among these is the everlasting horse-shoe. Some brooches of this shape are set with very large brilliants, which take up the whole width; the little intervals in the corners on the outer line being filled with small diamonds, which form tiny points set a little without the edge. Pearls and colored stones are treated in the same way. Others are composed of two rows of stones. One, the outer one, consists of rubies, sapphires and turquoises—polished, not cut—into the shape of grains of wheat, a tiny diamond point between each; the inner of the row of small diamonds, the whole set in a solid gold horse-shoe with a pin attached. Horse-shoes made of single rows of stones are used in trios for brooches, bound together with a link set with diamonds. They are also—especially the latter kind—strung on a nail, the pin being placed at the back of the latter which may be in plain gold with a square, gold head, or in gold with a head of blush steel. When this is the case the horseshoe is at most an inch long. A more complicated design consists of a diamond horse hoe with the points turned upward, behind which, set up vertically, is a gold nail, and on each side of the horseshoe three gold stakes with crossbars stand for the hurdle of the French steeplechase.

Less expensive brooches are made in this form entirely of gold, the stakes and nail being in polished metal, and the horseshoe in hammered gold. Single horseshoe brooches are also made of hammered gold, and enlivened by the addition of a small diamond set carelessly on one side.

Another simple form has taken lately, namely, the circular ring; these brooches are composed in the same way as the horseshoe, that is to say, of single rows of brilliants or pearls divided by small diamonds, of brilliants alternating with sapphires, or of double rows of stones—diamonds and rubies, or diamonds and sapphires. They are set in solid gold, and the small diamonds outside may or may not make little points on the outer circle. The round brooch for the rest is no novelty; hoops, or rings of gems, being merely modern revivals of forms in great favor during the last century. The plain and frosted gold roses are almost circular; and coins, discs, plates, and other circular forms, have been worn for a long time. Various devices are inclosed in circular hoops of metal. Thus, the salamander; it is generally made in yellow or greenish gold, and the tail of the creature lies within the ring and the body across. The rose of England, also inclosed in a gold ring, serves as a brooch, and others are made with spray of roses entwined within. An eccentricity in circular brooches consists of a hoop of gold, within which are set three little rabbits in clustered diamonds running after each other on the inner side.

Crescents are as much in favor as ever, and they often have the outer line cut up by little diamond points, which have a very good effect and give them a more radiant appearance. The majority are composed of diamonds only, but others have a row of sapphires, cat's-eyes or pearls on the inner side. When used for brooches the crescent is set obliquely and turned upward with the two points to the right; in case of a pin for the hair it is put as vertically as possible, as the man in the moon appears in the sky just after sunset.

Flights of birds are in great favor as brooches. Here are flights of pigeons and swallows made of clustered diamonds arranged in perspective—the foremost being the smallest, and then growing larger; the head of one bird just touches the tail feathers of the one preceding it. In this case, and in that of a flight of five wild geese (also made of clustered diamonds set in silver), one design does for all the birds. But for others—flights of storks and wild geese—each bird is seen in a different attitude, and the effect of perspective is only obtained by size. Some of these brooches in pale gold are very artistic, the plain metal being more easy to manipulate. Owls do not fly in flocks, but a trio of owls make a good design for a brooch.—*Paris Cor. Manufacturing Jeweler.*

Douglass Mixture.

The Douglass mixture so often recommended for fowls is made thus: Dissolve one-half pound of sulphate of iron (copperas) in one gallon of soft water, then add one-half ounce of sulphuric acid (oil of vitriol). Keep the mixture corked in a jug or bottle. A greater or less quantity may be prepared, but the proportions here given should be observed. This preparation is one of the best tonics known for poultry. The usual dose is in the proportion of a gill to a gallon of drinking water three or four times a week; but when disease is present among the flock it should be given every day, and to fowls sick with roup or cholera give double the usual dose.—*Colman's Rural World.*